

honor a man who has dedicated so much of his own time to such a selfless service.

The National Weather Service collects and maintains a database of daily climate reports that is among the best in the world. National Weather Service uses the data from that record to help forecast climate and weather changes and issue weather warnings. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration also uses the data to understand and predict climate trends. Estimates suggest that such climate predictions helped prevent up to one billion dollars in damage from the devastating effects of El Nino in California alone.

But such an extensive and accurate database cannot be created overnight. Our country relies on dedicated volunteers like Joseph who take the time to make and report their weather observations as part of the Cooperative Weather Observer program. The roots of the program reach as far back as 1644, when Reverend John Campanius Holm recorded the American Colonies' first known weather observations. Then, in 1891, the Weather Bureau tackled the challenge given them to document climate conditions in the United States. For over one hundred years, the Weather Service has called on volunteers to gather the necessary measurements on weather factors such as temperature and precipitation. With over 11,000 volunteer observers contributing over one million service hours, it is significant to note that the National Weather Service has chosen to recognize Joseph Hannigan with their most prestigious recognition, the John Campanius Holm Award. Considering Joseph's 42 years of consistent service, he is deserving of an award named after the very first volunteer weather observer in the American Colonies. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today to praise Joseph Hannigan for his dedicated service to the National Weather Service before this body of Congress and this nation. He stands out as an example of the cooperative spirit that has helped make this country great. From his efforts, combined with the work of countless others, our communities enjoy the economic, recreational, and safety benefits that an accurate and timely weather forecast affords them. I am honored to extend my gratitude to Joseph and the many other volunteers for what they have accomplished. Keep up the good work!

#### HONORING THE MCALLEN MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL CONSTITUTION TEAM

#### HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 5, 2003*

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge an outstanding group of young scholars from my Congressional district. The McAllen Memorial High School Constitution team recently won the Texas state title at the "We The People, The Citizen and the Constitution" annual competition. Remarkably, this is the McAllen team's 10th State win in 13 years. They have also been successful nationally, finishing among the top ten finalists in 4 out of 10 appearances.

I am proud to represent a community that produces students with such a passion for learning the democratic principles and founda-

tion of our government. I congratulate the team members and their parents for this extraordinary achievement. I congratulate the team members and their parents for this extraordinary achievement. The members of the team are thirteen high school seniors; Erika Garcia, Brian Trautman, Victoria Montemayor, Allison Glass, Gregory Goldsmith, Danessa Litam, Gisela Medina, Edwin Monroy, Kelly Monroy, Jeffrey Murray, Steffy Phillip, Sabrina Tully, Brian Van Burkleo. Ms. LeAnna Morse coached the team. I wish these students success when they compete at the national competition in April, here in Washington, DC.

In closing, I would like to share with my colleagues an article that ran in the McAllen Monitor highlighting the accomplishment of these young constitutional scholars.

#### MCALLEN CONSTITUTION TEAM WINS 10TH STATE TITLE

(By Juan Ozuna)

MCALLEN.—Hamilton, Madison and Franklin would be impressed with the McAllen Memorial High School Constitution team.

The 13-member team comprised of high school seniors was named state champion in the We The People, The Citizen and the Constitution competition in Austin Jan. 4.

It is the 10th time in 13 years the group has won the competition, sponsored by the State Bar of Texas.

"They really demonstrated an ability to think on their feet," said LeAnna Morse, a government teacher and the team's coach. "I'm really proud of them."

During the competition, each team is divided into groups of three. These trios each face a panel of attorneys, educators and community leaders and make a three-minute presentation on the Constitution. They answer questions asked by the panel of judges and are awarded points for their answers.

"This was a small team, so they had to carry extra weight, and they really rose to the occasion," Morse said.

Teams usually have 15 members. To help train the group, Morse asked some friends and other community people to come in to the class to act as judges for her team.

"We'd have practices and invite attorneys and academics to judge them so they could have the full experience," Morse said. "When you practice, you always try to anticipate what questions you'll be asked in the follow-up."

Mick West, history coordinator for McAllen school district and a sponsor of the team, accompanied the students to the competition, which he said was extremely competitive.

"They did an outstanding job," he said. "It was very close. They have a great reputation."

Team member Erika Garcia said there was a lot of pressure on the students to perform well because of their reputation.

"It's good to know that we fulfilled that tradition one more year," Garcia said. "Our sponsors have prepared us very well."

Teammate Brian Trautman said he also felt the heat of the competition, calling the win "a relief."

"I'm really excited," he said. "I can't wait to go to nationals to compete."

As the winning team, the McAllen Memorial High School students will be sent to Washington, D.C., in April to compete against the top team from each state.

Though Morse's teams have seen top-10 finishes at the national level, the highest they ever placed is fourth.

Though also excited about being able to attend the national Constitution competition, Victoria Montemayor said she would be more focused on the sights.

"I just want to see the actual documents," Montemayor said. "I want to see the monuments, see all the places you see in the books."

Other students on the team include Allison Glass, Gregory Goldsmith, Danessa Litam, Gisela Medina, Edwin Monroy, Kelly Monroy, Jeffrey Murray, Steffy Phillip, Sabrina Tully and Brian van Burkleo.

#### REINTRODUCTION OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK WILDERNESS ACT

#### HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 5, 2003*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am again introducing a bill to designate as wilderness most of the lands within the Rocky Mountain National Park, in Colorado.

This legislation will provide important protection and management direction for some truly remarkable country, adding nearly 250,000 acres in the park to the National Wilderness Preservation System. The bill is essentially identical to one previously introduced by my predecessor, Representative David Skaggs, and one I introduced in the 107th Congress. Those bills in turn were based on similar measures earlier proposed, including some by former Senator Bill Armstrong and others.

Over a number of years my predecessor and I have worked with the National Park Service and others to refine the boundaries of the areas proposed for wilderness designation and consulted closely with many interested parties in Colorado, including local officials and both the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District and the St. Vrain & Left Hand Ditch Water Conservancy District. These consultations provided the basis for many of the provisions of the bill I am introducing today, particularly regarding the status of existing water facilities.

Covering some 94 percent of the park, the new wilderness will include Longs Peaks and other major mountains along the Great Continental Divide, glacial cirques and snow fields, broad expanses of alpine tundra and wet meadows, old-growth forests, and hundreds of lakes and streams, all untrammelled by human structures or passage. Indeed, examples of all the natural ecosystems that make up the splendor of Rocky Mountain National Park are included in the wilderness that would be designated by this bill.

The features of these lands and waters that make Rocky Mountain National Park a true gem in our national parks system also make it an outstanding wilderness candidate.

The wilderness boundaries are carefully located to assure continued access for use of existing roadways, buildings and developed areas, privately owned land, and areas where additional facilities and roadwork will improve park management and visitor services. In addition, specific provisions are included to assure that there will be no adverse effects on continued use of existing water facilities.

This bill is based on National Park Service recommendations, prepared more than 25 years ago and presented to Congress by President Richard Nixon. It seems to me that, in that time, there has been sufficient study, consideration, and refinement of those recommendations so that Congress can proceed